

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

"Don't Mess with Texas"

Standard: III. People, Places, and Environments
IX. Global Connections
X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Grade Level: 9–12 (*Note: Outlining skill and cooperative grouping*)

Objectives: The student will:

- Record facts on the history of the Texan Republic
- Find comparisons in Stephen Austin's words with the wording of American theory of government in early documents, such as the Declaration of Independence
- Share key sentences from the speech that could carry over to the present
- Relearn outlining skills

Time: 1½ class periods

Materials: Document: **1836** *Address of Stephen F. Austin*
Exercises: *Historical Outline and Comparative Analysis Sheet*
Resources: *Map of Texas*

Textbooks; classroom reference materials
Index cards

Procedures:

Setting the Stage

Stephen Austin's speech provides a complete history of events within Texas, and it reads like an outline of Texas history up to 1836.

In this lesson, students will outline the speech, discovering the story of Texas while looking for terminology that is comparable to that found in other early American documents.

Students will also be asked to find sentences and/or paragraphs that would be appropriate for any new country seeking to form a democratic republic that emphasizes the rights of individuals. Would any of the paragraphs be appropriate for any emerging democratic states in today's world?

Pre-Lesson: put one 3 x 5 index card on each desk.

1. Ask students to get out Stephen Austin's speech and their labeled map of Texas (which they have already used in a previous lesson), or distribute them if they have not done the lesson, *Legends of a Lone Star*.
2. Hand out the *Historical Outline and Comparative Analysis Sheet*.
3. Assign students to cooperative groups, explaining that they will work together to fill in this outline and comparison list. However **each** member of the group should complete the analysis sheet.
4. It will take at least 40 minutes to complete this task.
5. After the groups have finished, ask students to send a person to the board to list any terminology they found that was similar to historic American documents.
6. Each group should either add to one list **OR** in a separate column on the board (one for each cooperative group.) Students may want to add to their list or delete from what they see others did to avoid duplication.
7. Next, ask individuals to share any sentence or set of sentences that might fit a new nation of today seeking democracy. As they report, ask them which of the terms on the board would also apply. This could lead to a quality discussion on world events.
8. To close the lesson, ask the students to look again at the map of Texas, at the outline of its history, and the terms on the board. Direct them to write one declarative sentence about Texan history that would make a nation not want to "mess with Texas." Students should then record this sentence on their "exit ticket" (the index card.)

Remind them to keep this outline and list of terms, as you will allow them to use it as notes for your next test. (Create a few test questions that will incorporate a need to review the outline and the list of terms.)

9. Index cards may be posted for all the students to read.

Extension Activities:

1. Extend the discussion of current global events. How difficult is the transition when "old" nations attempt to become new democracies. Have students research the experience of nations that emerged from:
 - a. The dissolution of the British and French colonial empires in Africa after World War II;
 - b. The break-up of the Soviet Union in the 1990s; or
 - c. The Arab Spring of 2011.
2. If there are terms that students do not know in the list, have students use the Frayer Vocabulary Model to *Play with Words*. (This is not included as a Resource.)
3. Write an editorial to a local newspaper, dated 1836, taking a position for or against Stephen Austin's message. ■